

# A new species of *Cupido* (Lycaenidae) from the Zoutpansberg

by

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## ***Cupido (Lepidochrysops) vansonii* sp. nov.**

Holotype: male, farm Swartklip, Vivo, Zoutpansberg dist. Transvaal, 5th March, 1947. (D. A. Swanepoel). (Fig. 1 and 2).

Allotype: female, same locality and date. (D. A. Swanepoel). (Fig. 3 and 4).

Paratypes: 10 males 3rd March, 1948. 5 males 22nd. Feb., 1948. 8 males, 1 female 5th March, 1947. 6 males, 3 females 25th February, 1948. 1 female 15th February, 1948. All these are in my collection. The following are in the collection of the Transvaal Museum. 1 male 5th March, 1947. 3 males, 1 female 25th February, 1948. 1 male 3rd March, 1948.

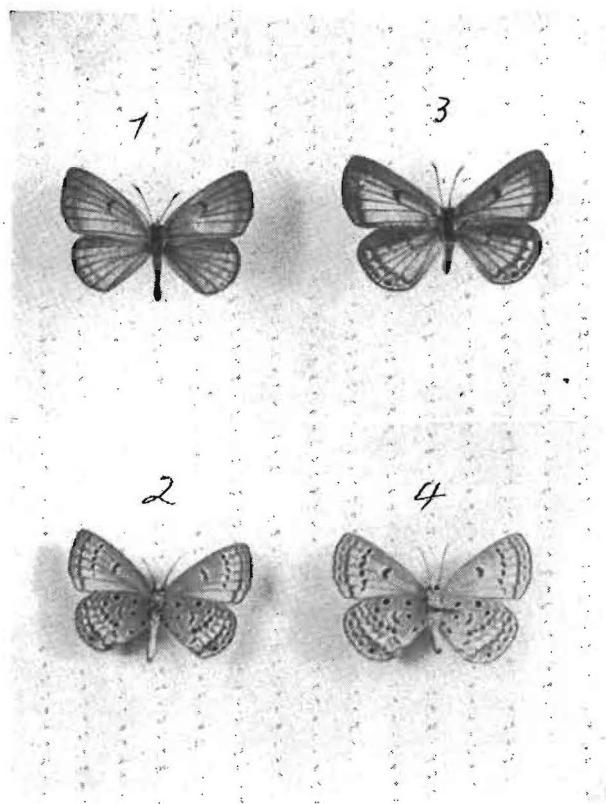
Holotype male. Head: frons and palpi below and at side white, third joint of palpi black above. Antennae black, shaft finely checkered with white, club very elongate with the outer half brown below. Thorax: black, clothed above with greyish hairs except in front where they are blackish, below with white hairs and scales. Legs brown, scaled with whitish. Abdomen: brownish grey above, much lighter below.

*Upperside*: rather pale violaceous blue with very slight pinkish tinge; broad outer marginal fuscous edging, interrupted by faint whitish spots, being marginal spots of the underside showing through; cilia whitish; veins dark.

*Forewing*: a slender sublunulate, terminal discocellular mark; costa very narrowly edged with fuscous.

*Hindwing*: costa bordered with fuscous grey above vein six; very faint linear discocellular mark; marginal edging less conspicuous, owing to marginal spots of the underside being larger and more pronounced than those of the forewing; marginal spot in area 2 rather faint.

*Underside*: forewing, pale brownish grey becoming lighter towards the outer and inner margin; discocellular bar and discal spots; dark brownish grey, much darker than ground colour, ringed with whitish; subterminal line narrow and in line with outer border



except at vein two where it is incurved; a series of narrow almost contiguous submarginal streaks of the same colour as the sub-terminal line. Hindwing: no tail; ground colour the same as the forewing. Five distinct black spots ringed with white. Two along costa, one in cell below middle, smaller than previous ones along inner margin; discocellular mark as in forewing; a row of six discal spots, those in area 2 and 3 shifted inwards, the one in area 2 more so, a row of whitish sagitate marks bordering the inner edge of the subterminal line which is incurved between the veins; sub-terminal spots much broader than that in forewing, that in area 2 black broadly edged on the inner side with orange yellow, dusted outwardly with silvery blue scales; in area 3 a faint trace of orange yellow bordering subterminal spot and a trace of similar bordering of the rather darker subterminal spot in area 1a.

Allotype female: upperside, forewing blue less extensive than in male, pinkish tinge stronger; bases more violaceous; very broad

costal and outer marginal fuscous edging, the latter being faintly interrupted by lighter marks; discocellular mark broader than in male.

*Hindwing*: costa bordered with much wider fuscous-grey than in male; discocellular mark darker than in male, interrupted in the middle; subterminal line much heavier than in male; spot in area 2 duller than in male and bordered inwardly with a broad orange yellow lunule: a faint trace of orange-yellow in area 1.

*Underside*: about the same as in the male except for the following slight differences — an additional discal spot in forewing, area 1b, slanting outwards; discal spots in area 6 in both wings slightly blacker than the rest.

*Remarks*: This Cupido resembles *patricia* in many respects, but is readily distinguished by its smaller size, bluish scales on the wings less dense and absence of a tail. It flies more slowly than *patricia*, nearer the ground, does not rise so much up and down, circle or zig-zag as that species. I found it flying together with *patricia*, *parsimon*, *glauca*, *aethiopica* and *dolorosa*. It feeds and breeds on *Lantana salvifolia*.

I discovered the species on the farm Swartklip, two miles west of Vivo, Zoutpansberg dist., Transvaal. So far that is the only known locality in the Union of South Africa, but the discovery, also recently, of the species by Mr. F. Gaerdes at Grootfontein, S.W. Africa, indicates its distribution over a very vast area. It would seem that its natural habitat is the Kalahari desert, from where the farm Swartklip is not very far, and to which it blends in many respects, except for the sand. From the Kalahari it probably ranges in all directions to limits yet unknown. It is very likely that *vansonii* is to be found in other localities north of the Zoutpansberg. How far it ranges south of Vivo has as yet not been ascertained.

I have much pleasure in naming this butterfly in honour of Dr. G. van Son of the Transvaal Museum.